

Minutes of DAAC Meeting

Attendance

DAAC members present were: Seren Derin, Chair; Joe Tringali, Vice-chair; Irene Barrelet, Clerk; Joan Rising; Jim MacRostie, and Dana Goddard.

Others present were Gerry Weiss, Select Board Representative; Kris Pacunas, Director of IT for Amherst; Jason Venditti, Capital Project Manager for UMass; Michael Martin, Director of Project Operations for All State Construction; Mr. Murphy of Stantec Consulting Services; and Nathaniel Malloy, DAAC staff liaison

Absent: None

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Derin called the meeting to order at 3:09 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

MINUTES

Minutes from the May, 2009 meeting were reviewed and discussed. No corrections were found. Ms. Barrelet made a motion to accept the minutes; Mr. Tringali seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to accept the May minutes as submitted.

NEW BUSINESS

North Pleasant Street & Governor's Drive Intersection Work (UMass)

Mr. Venditti from UMass gave a brief introduction and overview explaining the design and construction that will occur at the intersection of North Pleasant Street and Governor's Drive/Eastman Lane. The project will be completed in two phases, each approximately one year in length. Phase one involves replacing steam lines and utilities under the existing intersection as well as rerouting vehicular and pedestrian traffic during this construction. A temporary four-way intersection will be configured just east of the existing intersection, and will use a video detection traffic light system to facilitate vehicular movement. Crosswalks and off-street asphalt sidewalks will be provided, with the exception of a sidewalk on the east side of North Pleasant Street north of the intersection for approximately 300 feet. The crosswalks will be setback from the intersection and will be flush with the road surface. Cyclists will continue to share the road with automobiles. Phase two, which has yet to commence, will be the redesign and construction of a new intersection to be completed in the fall of 2011.

Mr. Tringali asked if the temporary sidewalk to the northwest of the intersection, which will traverse through the vacant house lot, will be unnecessarily long. Mr. Venditti responded that currently a sidewalk exists in this location and it is heavily used, so that the temporary sidewalk will not deviate much from existing conditions.

Ms. Barrelet asked if there will be wheelchair accessibility through the intersection during phase one. Mr. Venditti responded that there will be access from all directions coming into the

intersection, just as there is now. There will be pedestrian controlled signals at the two crosswalks near the intersection.

Mr. Venditti continued to explain details of the project: all new curb cuts will have accessible wheelchair ramps, temporary sidewalks will have the correct cross slope, there will be no impact to existing bus stops, and temporary bike lanes will be painted in the rerouted roads in and around the intersection. Mr. Venditti also said that at certain times, a police officer will be present in the intersection to help direct traffic. To help reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular traffic, a significant amount of work will be completed during the summer months when fewer students attend the university.

Mr. Tringali suggested that in addition to on-grade crosswalk signs, vertical, standing signs be installed so that pedestrians and drivers would be alerted to the crosswalk. This would also help maintain visibility of the crosswalks in the winter.

Mr. Tringali also suggested that tactile paving be used near the curb cuts to signal to the blind and visually impaired that they were nearing a grade change and entering the street.

Mr. Weiss asked if Harkness Drive, to the west of the intersection, would be an active street running into Governor's Drive. Mr. Venditti explained that a turnaround would be used to keep all traffic on Harkness Drive.

Ms. Barrelet suggested that crosswalk signals that countdown the crossing time be used in this intersection during and after construction.

Hampshire Athletic Club

Mr. Tringali said that years ago the Club had an accessible changing table in the men's locker room and a lift to help people into the pool, and that now, these two features are missing. He questioned whether renovations and additions in recent years would have triggered ADA compliancy.

Ms. Derin suggested that Mr. Tringali contact Hampshire Athletic Club to inquire about these issues and determine if an accessible bench and lift could be added to their facility.

Other

None

OLD BUSINESS

High School Auditorium

Ms. Derin suggested that members of the DAAC schedule a site visit to inspect the accessibility improvements made recently to the auditorium.

Emergency Contact Information

Kris Pacunas, IT Director for the Town of Amherst, explained that the Town will be soliciting personal contact information for the deaf and hard of hearing to improve communications during emergencies. The information collected would be used to contact those who may not receive the

reverse 911 calls made by the Town. A registration form that can be completed by individuals and an advertisement explaining this outreach effort will be posted on the Town's website and in local newspapers the week of July 6th. Mr. Pacunas also suggested a follow-up meeting in August to determine the success of the program.

Mr. Weiss suggested that the registration form be prominently placed or easily accessed from the Disability Access Advisory Committee webpage.

Ms. Derin asked how the registration form could be submitted. Mr. Pacunas answered that the form can be mailed to Town Hall, submitted electronically over the internet, and residents can call in their information by using the phone number provided on the advertisement.

Ms. Rising suggested that this advertisement and registration form be published in *Hampshire Life* as means of reaching as wide an audience as possible.

Ms. Derin suggested that the form also include the option of listing an alternate contact person to relay the message if the intended recipient cannot be reached.

Ms. Derin suggested that the registration form and advertisement be distributed at Stavros and the Senior Center. Mr. Tringali agreed and suggested that they could be mailed to Stavros members.

Private Parking Lots

Mr. Weiss said that the Select Board has preliminarily supported amending the Town's general bylaws to regulate handicapped parking on private property. The Select Board has requested that Town Counsel research the issue in preparation for an article at the Fall Town Meeting.

Amherst Train Station

Mr. Malloy explained that a "Save Our Stop" committee is being developed to assess and investigate the feasibility of continuing to use the Amherst Depot as an active rail stop. The DAAC suggested that Mr. Malloy be copied on the committee's correspondence.

Other

None

Next Meeting

August 11, 2009 @ 3:00 pm.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Nathaniel Malloy, staff liaison